

Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the orderly and peaceful election that took place in Colombia.

I congratulate President-elect of Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos and commend the people of Colombia for their relentless dedication to the democratic process, shown through this election.

In an increasingly volatile region, Colombia has continued on the path towards reform while combating drug trafficking and terrorism, efforts that have had a positive effect on Colombian and American national security.

Additionally, Colombia has made remarkable progress on other fronts, emerging as an important growth market and a leading center for Latin American business.

In the face of hostility towards U.S. interests and values, Colombia has consistently proven itself to be an important friend, a reliable partner and a champion for democracy.

The positive bilateral relationship between the United States and Colombia has been based on many common strategic and ideological interests, reaffirming Colombia's position as an important ally and long-time friend to the United States.

Again, I congratulate President-elect Juan Manuel Santos on his victory, I look forward to a continued partnership between our two nations, and I urge my colleagues to support H.Res. 1465, in congratulations of the President-elect.

I yield back.